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Hale - Annals of Keene - 1826

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George S. Hale



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ANNALS
OF THE
TOWN OF KEENE,

FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT, IN 1734,

TO THE YEAR 1790.

—●—
BY SALMA HALE.
—●—

First published in the Collections of the New-Hampshire Historical Society.

CONCORD:
PRINTED BY JACOB B. MOORE.

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Apr. 25, 1921

George S. Hale

Preface.



THE following annals were compiled at the request of the New-Hampshire Historical Society, and of several citizens of Keene. It was thought of some public importance to seize the opportunity, now rapidly passing away, of placing on record, to preserve from oblivion, the most interesting events which, since its first settlement, have occurred in this place. It has been the principal object of the compiler to give a correct and lively impress of the age gone by. This he thought could be best accomplished by copying freely and fully such written documents as came under his inspection. "Speak, that I may know thee," was the address of a Grecian sage to a stranger. That the present generation and posterity may know their ancestors, they have here been brought forward to speak for themselves.

For the facts and proceedings, not related in the words of the actors, the public are indebted to THOMAS WELLS, JOSEPH ELLIS, and several others, aged and respectable inhabitants of this town, or of that portion of Sullivan which once formed a part of it.

Annals of Keene.

KEENE, which is one of the shire towns in the county of Cheshire, was first settled under the authority of Massachusetts. At the time of its settlement, the line between that colony and New-Hampshire had not been surveyed, nor its direction ascertained, and it was generally supposed that the valley of the Ashuelot* would fall within the boundaries of the former.

1732.

In June, Gov. Belcher, in his speech to the "Great and General Court" of Massachusetts, recommended, that "care be taken to settle the ungranted land." In the House of Representatives, it was thereupon voted, "that there be seven towns opened, of the contents of six miles square; one west of the Narragansett town, that is near Wachusett Hill; one between the equivalent lands and Rutland, on or near the road lately laid out from Swift River to Rutland; one at Poquaig, (Athol) on Miller's river; one west of the town called Northtown; two on Ashuelot river, above Northfield; and the other in the eastern country, at the head of Berwick: that committees be appointed to admit settlers and lay out house lots, so that the settlements may be made in a defensible manner, and to direct in the drawing thereof, but not to lay out any further division without directions from this court; that there shall be sixty-three house lots, laid out in each township, one for the first settled minister, one for the ministry, one for the school, and one for each of the sixty settlers, who shall set-

* In the Indian language, the word Ashuelot is said to mean a collection of many waters.

tle thereon, in his own person, or by any of his children; the rest of the land to be allotted or divided equally into sixty-three parts; that one year from the survey be allowed for the admission of settlers, and that the committee be directed to demand and receive, from each settler, at his admission, five pounds,* part of which shall be employed for reimbursing the province the money to be advanced for paying the committees, and the charges of the survey, the remainder to be employed for building houses of publick worship, or otherwise, as the General Court shall order; that each settler actually live on his land within three years after his admission, and continue there for the space of two years after, in person and with his family, if such he have; that he do, within five years from his admission, build a house on his land, of eighteen feet square and seven feet stud, at the least, and within the same time do sufficiently fence and till, or fit for mowing, eight acres of land; and in case any settler fail of performance, his right to be forfeited; and the committee for admitting settlers are directed to take of each, at the time of admission, a bond for twenty pounds for the use and benefit of the settlers, in case he fail of performing the conditions mentioned; and the settlers, in each town, shall be obliged to build a suitable

* This was probably of the paper money then current in Massachusetts. Like the continental money of later times, it was at par when the first issues were made, but afterwards depreciated greatly. The following table, shewing its value at different periods, will enable the reader to calculate the value of the sums hereafter mentioned in this history. The second and fourth columns shew the value, in paper, (old times) of an ounce of silver, which was equal to six shillings and eight pence, *lawful* money.

	s.	d.	q.		s.	d.	q.
1702	6	10	2	1728	18		
1705	7			1730	20		
1713	8			1737	26		
1716	9			1741	28		
1717	12						
1722	14			1749	60		

Soon after 1742, old tenor rose to fifty shillings the ounce, the General Court of Massachusetts having engaged to redeem it at that rate with the money received from the British parliament, as a reimbursement for the expenses incurred in taking Louisbourg. At 50s. the ounce, 100 pounds were equal to £13, 6s. 8d. *lawful*; and 45 shillings were equal to one dollar.

meeting house, and settle a learned and orthodox minister, in such town, within five years from their admission."

1733.

On the first of July, this vote was concurred by the Council, and "consented to" by the Governor; but the committee appointed to make the survey not attending to their duty, it was, Oct. 19, 1733, voted, that another committee, consisting of Joseph Kellog, Timothy Dwight, and William Chandler, be appointed, with directions, forthwith to lay out the townships at Poquaig and on Ashuelot river, "unless they find that, by reason of laying out the township granted to Col. Willard and others, (Winchester,) the land remaining at Ashuelot river will not well serve for two townships, in which case, they are directed to lay out only one on that river."

1734.

In February, the committee made a return to the General Court of a "Plat of two townships, each of the contents of six miles square, situated on each side of Ashuelot river above the tract of land lately granted to Col. Josiah Willard and others, beginning at a spruce or white pine tree, standing about midway between the south and east branches of said river, about five perch east of the bank of the main river, and thence running each way as described on the plat." This is the dividing line between the upper and lower townships. The plat was accepted, and the lands contained in said townships were declared to lie in, and constitute a part of, the county of Hampshire.

In March, a committee was appointed to lay out house lots, in the townships mentioned, who, in June, made a report of a plat of the house lots in the upper township on Ashuelot river. Of these lots, fifty-four were laid out on the village plain,

twenty-seven on each side of the main street, and the other nine upon the plain, on Swanzey line, north of the factory. They were 160 rods long, and eight wide, each containing eight acres. The surveyors reported, that near the spruce or white pine tree, above mentioned, they made their first *station*. Hence originated the name, *Statia*, which has been applied to an excellent farm in that quarter of the town. The lots owned by Daniel Watson, and Dr. Twitchell, are the most northerly of the house lots.

This committee being also authorized to admit settlers, they notified all persons, desirous of taking lots, to meet at Concord, in Massachusetts, on the 26th of June. A few days previous to that time, the General Court voted, that, after the sixty persons for each township shall have drawn lots, given bonds, and paid their five pounds, according to the order of this Court, passed July, 1732, they forthwith assemble, at Concord, Mass. and then and there choose a moderator and proprietors' clerk, agree upon rules and methods for the fulfilment of their respective grants, for making further divisions, and for calling other meetings, and attend to any other matters or things necessary for the speedy settlement of said townships. No charter was ever granted to the proprietors by Massachusetts, and their title to the lands rested wholly upon these several votes of the General Court.

Agreeably to the notice given by the committee, a meeting was held at Concord, on the 26th June, when the sixty settlers, for the upper township, on Ashuelot river, were admitted. Among them are found the names of Jeremiah Hall, John Hawks, William Smeed, Isaac Heaton, John Guild, Joseph Ellis, John Nims, Josiah Fisher, Mark Ferry, and Stephen Blake.

The next day, a full meeting of the proprietors was held at Concord; Samuel Sady was chosen

Moderator, and Samuel Heywood, proprietors' Clerk, "who was sworn before the worshipful Justice Goddard;" and the meeting was adjourned to the 18th of Sept. then to be held on the township.

In the succeeding September, seven persons, proprietors, or sons of proprietors, whose names were Jeremiah Hall, Daniel Hoar, Seth Heaton, Elisha Root, Nathaniel Rockwood, Josiah Fisher, William Puffer, set out for the township. None of them having previously visited it, they were accompanied by Deacon Alexander, of Northfield, as a pilot. They did not arrive at the line of the township until late in the evening of the 18th. the day to which the meeting was adjourned; and as soon as their pilot informed them they had passed it, they opened the meeting, and adjourned to the next day.

At the meeting held the next day, a vote was passed, that the whole of the interval land in the township should be surveyed, and that half of it should be lotted out in two enclosures, one so situated as to accommodate the 54 house lots, laid out on the village plain, the other so as to accommodate the 9 house lots, laid out on Swanzev line. A committee was also appointed "to search and find out the best and most convenient way to travel from the upper unto the lower township."

At this period, Upper Ashuelot was a frontier settlement, in the bosom of the wilderness. It was of course most exposed to savage incursions, and was liable to suffer, in their extremity, all those distresses and calamities, which may be alleviated, if not prevented, by the assistance and good offices of others. Its nearest neighbor was Northfield, twenty miles distant; Winchester, which was first granted, not being then settled, or containing at most not more than two or three huts.

1735.

The next meeting of the proprietors was held at Concord, Mass. on the last Wednesday of May. The committee appointed to survey the interval land made a report. The lots they had laid out contained eight acres ; and as they were not all equal in quality, the proprietors voted that certain enumerated lots should have *qualification*, or allowance, to consist of from two to four acres each, and appointed a committee to lay out these allowances. The practice of *qualifying* lots, thus introduced, was afterwards pursued, and occasioned great irregularity in the future allotments of land.

At this meeting, a committee was also appointed "to join with such as the lower town proprietors shall appoint, to search and find out whether the ground will admit of a convenient road from the two townships, on Ashuelot river, down to the town of Townshend."

At a subsequent meeting, held in September of the same year, on the township, the proprietors were assessed in the sum of sixty pounds, and a committee was "appointed to *bill out* this money according to the proprietors' directions." It appears by the record, that the mode of *billing* out the money remaining in the treasury was often practised. A committee was also appointed to lay out a road to the Saw-mill place, which is about three quarters of a mile north from the house lots, and where the lower Saw-mill on Beaver brook now stands. A vote was also passed, offering one hundred acres of "middling good land," and twenty-five pounds, to any person or persons who would engage to build a saw-mill, and saw boards for the proprietors, at twenty shillings per thousand, and slit work for £3, 10s. per 1000. John Corbett and Jesse Root, appeared and undertook to build the mill, and a committee was thereupon appointed to lay out the land. The mill was to be finished by the first

day of July, 1736. Under date of May, 1735, appears a record of the expense of laying out the second division of lots. The surveyor was allowed 45 shillings, (70 cts) four others were allowed 12 shillings and two others 10 shillings per day.

1736.

On the 30th day of September, a meeting of the proprietors was opened, according to appointment, at the *house lot* of Joseph Fisher, but was immediately removed to the *house* of Nathan Blake. This house was probably the first erected in the township. A committee was appointed "to agree with a man to build a great mill," and they were authorized to offer "not exceeding forty pounds encouragement therefor." The proprietors also voted to build a meeting-house, at the south end of the town street, at the place appointed by the General Court's committee, (near where Mr. Carpenter's house now stands) to be forty feet long, twenty feet stud, and thirty-five feet wide, and to lay boards for the lower floor—the house to be finished by the 26th day of June, 1737.

At the same meeting, a vote was passed to widen the main street, which was originally but four rods wide. It provided that, if the proprietors of the house lots, on the west side of the street, would surrender four rods in depth, on the end of their lots adjoining the street, they should have it made up in quantity, in the rear. This proposition was acceded to; and to this measure the village is indebted for its broad and elegant main street.

No person had hitherto attempted to remain through the winter on the township. Those who came in the summer to clear their lands, brought their provisions with them, and erected temporary huts to shelter them from the weather. In the summer of 1736, at least one house was erected; and three persons, Nathan Blake, Seth Heaton and

William Smeed, the two first from Wrentham and the last from Deerfield, made preparations to pass the winter in the wilderness. Their house was at the lower end of the street. Blake had a pair of oxen and a horse, and Heaton a horse. For the support of these, they collected grass in the open spots; and in the first part of the winter, they employed them in drawing logs to the saw-mill, which had just been completed. Blake's horse fell through the ice of Beaver brook and was drowned. In the beginning of February, their own provisions were exhausted, and to obtain a supply of meal, Heaton was despatched to Northfield. There were a few families at Winchester, but none able to furnish what was wanted. Heaton procured a quantity of meal; but before he left Northfield, the snow began to fall, and when, on his return, he arrived at Winchester, it was uncommonly deep, and covered by a sharp crust. He was told "that he might as well expect to die in Northfield and rise again in Upper Ashuelot, as ride thither on horse-back." Recollecting the friends he had left there, he nevertheless determined to make the attempt, but had proceeded but a short distance when he found that it would be impossible to succeed. He then returned, and directed his course towards Wrentham. Blake and Smeed, hearing nothing from Heaton, gave the oxen free access to the hay, left Ashuelot, and on snow shoes proceeded either to Deerfield or Wrentham. Anxious for their oxen, they returned early in the spring. They found them near the Branch, south-east of Carpenter's, much emaciated, but feeding upon twigs and such grass as was bare. The oxen recognised their owner, and exhibited such pleasure at the meeting as drew tears from his eyes.

1737.

At a meeting of the proprietors, held May 12, they voted to assess sixty pounds on the proprie-

tors of the house-lots, for the purpose of hiring a gospel minister, and chose a committee to agree with some meet person to preach the gospel among them. This meeting was adjourned, to be held at the meeting-house place, on the 20th of May. On the day appointed, it was there opened, but was immediately removed to the interval land, and there a vote was passed, that another division of meadow land should be made. A committee was also chosen to "represent this propriety in applying to, and receiving of the Honourable the General Court's committee, for this township, the money granted to said proprietors when they shall have the frame of a meeting-house raised, and forty proprietors settled on the spot."

The next meeting was held at the meeting-house *frame*, June 30. Jeremiah Hall was recompensed for his services in searching for, and laying out, a road to Townsend, and two others were added to the committee appointed to apply to the General Court's committee "for the one hundred pounds," mentioned in the proceedings of the last meeting. It was also voted, "that no meeting of the proprietors be held, for the future, but at this place, so long as there shall be seven proprietors inhabiting here."

At a meeting held October 26, a vote was passed, that "the *worthy* Mr. Jacob Bacon should draw for the second division of meadow land, for the whole propriety." This is the first time that the name of Mr. Bacon, who was the first settled minister of the town, is mentioned in the records.

At the same meeting, a vote was passed, to lay out one hundred acres of upland to each house-lot or right. The proprietors were to draw lots for choice, and he who drew No. 1, was to make his pitch by a certain day; and those who drew the successive numbers on successive days, excluding Sundays, thus "giving every man his day." Each lot was surveyed by a committee, in such ~~plan~~ *place* and

in such shape as the proprietor drawing it directed. Some of the plans recorded in the proprietors' records, exhibit figures which Euclid never imagined, and probably could not measure. Common land was left in every part of the township, in pieces of all sizes and shapes. In this manner, great confusion in lines was introduced, by which the owners of real estate are yet perplexed and embarrassed.

1738.

On the 7th February, Jacob Bacon, A. M. was chosen proprietors' Clerk and Treasurer. A vote was passed, raising 240 pounds to support the preaching of the gospel, and other necessary charges, and a committee appointed to provide preaching. A committee was also appointed "to procure an anvil, bellows, vice, sledge-hammer and tongs, fit for the work of a blacksmith, and to let the same to a blacksmith, as long as he shall use and improve them in the proprietors' business, by faithfully doing their work, at their request, before any other business or work, for any other person or persons whatsoever."

At a meeting of the proprietors, held at the meeting house in the township, May 1, the proprietors proceeded to the choice of a suitable person to settle in the ministry, and Mr. Jacob Bacon was unanimously chosen. A vote was also passed, offering Mr. Bacon, as a settlement, 150 pounds, (in bills of credit of the old tenor,) provided he accept the call of the proprietors. By another vote, he was offered a yearly salary of 130 pounds (old tenor) for ten years, with an addition of ten pounds yearly afterwards, so long as he continued the minister of the place, and a committee was appointed to lay these proposals before him.

The proposals were accordingly laid before him by a letter from the committee. On the 5th of August, Mr. Bacon, by letter, accepted the call on condition that the town would furnish him "a yearly supply of fire wood, at his door."

At a meeting, held Oct. 2, the proprietors voted "to add ten pounds to Mr. Bacon's salary, at the end of ten years after his settling among them, and thereby raise his salary to 150 pounds, money of the present currency; and to find him so much good fire wood as he shall need, ready drawn to his door."

Although the whites were, at this time, at peace with the Indians, yet, deeming it not prudent to remain without some means of defence, the proprietors, at this meeting, voted, that they would finish the fort, which was already begun, and that every one that should work, or had worked, at said fort, should bring in his account to the surveyor of highways, and should be allowed therefor, on his highway tax bill. This fort was situated on a small eminence, a few rods north of the house of Dr. Adams. When completed, it was about 90 feet square; there were two ovens, and two wells in the enclosure. It was built of hewn logs. In the interior, next to the walls, were twenty barracks, each having one room. On the outside, it was two stories high, in the inside, but one, the roof over the barracks inclining inwards. In the space above the barracks, were loop-holes to fire from with muskets. There were two watch houses, one at the south-east corner, and one on the western side, each erected on four high posts set upright in the earth. And for greater safety, the whole was surrounded by pickets.

On the 18th of October, a church was gathered, and Mr. Bacon ordained, the churches represented being those of Wrentham, Sunderland, Northfield and Medway.

December 4, the proprietors voted, "to finish the meeting house, on the outside, workman-like, viz. to cover it with good sawed clapboards, well planed, good window frames well glazed, and handsome-

ly to case the doors ; and so far to finish the inside as to lay the lower floor and build the body of the seats, the pulpit, one pew, the table and deacon's seat, all completely, workman-like."

About this time, John Andrews came from Boxford to settle in Upper Ashuelot. He sent back Ephraim Dorman and Joseph Ellis, with a team of eight oxen and a horse, to bring up his furniture. The route they came, which was probably then the best, if not the only one, led through Concord, Worcester, Brookfield, Belchertown, Hadley, Hatfield, Deerfield, Northfield, Winchester, Swanzey, and on the bank of the Ashuelot to the house lots. When they passed through Swanzey, it rained hard, and they did not reach the station until night. As it continued to rain, was very dark, and as the water, which already covered the meadows, rose rapidly, they, apprehensive of being drowned, unyoked their oxen, chained their cart to a tree, and hastened to the settlement, then a mile distant. As soon as day light appeared, the next morning, a boat was despatched in search of the cattle and furniture. When passing over Bullard's island, a man cried to them for help. It was Mark Ferry, the hermit. Wearied with the noise and bustle of the settlement, he had retired to a cave, which he had dug into the bank of the river, where he constantly resided. The water had now driven him from his dwelling, and compelled him to seek refuge on a stump, where he then sat, with a calf in his arms, over which he had drawn a shirt. The boatman answered, " we must take care of the *neat cattle* first," and passed on. They soon came to the cart which was afloat. Proceeding further, and guided by the sound of the bells, which the cattle as usual wore, they found them on several little hillocks, some with only their heads out of water. They forced them into the water, and guided them, swimming, to high land, where they left them until

the flood subsided. Hearing cries for help below them, they proceeded to Crissen's house, in the borders of Swanzey, to the chamber and to the top of which, the family had been driven. These, they took off, and, on their return home, took Ferry and his calf into the canoe. This, which was known by the name of Andrews' flood, was the highest ever known in the township. The water came within a few feet of the street, north of Capt. Blake's old house.

Mr. Andrews was the father of ten children, nine of whom he brought with him. Between September, 1744, and September, 1745, every one of the nine died of the throat distemper, and he then returned disconsolate to his former residence.

1740.

January 7, a meeting of the proprietors was held. In the warrant calling it, an article was inserted, "To make such grant or grants of land, to such person or persons as they shall think deserve the same, for hazarding their lives and estate by living here to bring forward the settling of the place." Upon this article, the following vote was passed, which probably gives the names of nearly all the men then residing in the township, and the number of dwellings erected. "Voted, to grant ten acres of upland to each of the persons hereafter named, viz. Jacob Bacon, clerk, Josiah Fisher, Joseph Fisher, Nathan Blake, William Smeed, Seth Heaton, Joseph Ellis, Ebenezer Nims, Joseph Guild, Joseph Richardson, Isaac Clark, Edward Dale, Jeremiah Hall, Ebenezer Force, Daniel Haws, Amos Foster, Ebenezer Day, Beriah Maccancy, Jabez Hill, Obed Blake, Jeremiah Hall, jr. David Nims, Timothy Puffer, Ebenezer Daniels, Nathan Fairbanks, John Bullard, David Foster, Solomon Richardson, Abner Ellis, Benjamin Guild, Asa Richardson, Ebenezer Hill, Samuel Fisher, Ephraim Dorman, Timothy Sparhawk, Jonathan Underwood, John Andrews,

Samuel Smith, Samuel Daniels, (39) and to such other persons, having an interest here, who, from the first of next March, to March 1742, shall make up the quantity or space of two years in living here, and build a legal dwelling house, to the number of sixty, including those before mentioned."

A rumor of war having reached the township, the proprietors, February 25, voted that they would build another fort, whenever seven of the proprietors should request it. It is not known, that this fort was ever built. They also voted that there should be allowed, for every man who should work upon the forts, eight shillings, and for every pair of oxen, four shillings, per day.

The long and spirited contest, between the provinces of Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, respecting the divisional line between them, had been carried before the King in council, and in 1740, a decision was made, that from a point three miles north of Pawtucket falls, the line should run due west until it reached his majesty's other governments. This left Upper Ashuelot far within the boundaries of New-Hampshire. Upon this subject, the proprietors, on the 3d day of October, held a meeting, and the following proceedings appear upon their records.

"The proprietors being informed that, by the determination of his majesty in council respecting the controverted bounds between the province of the Massachusetts and New Hampshire, they are excluded from the province of the Massachusetts Bay, to which they always supposed themselves to belong.

"Therefore, unanimously voted, that a petition be presented to the King's most excellent majesty, setting forth our distrest estate, and praying we may be annexed to the said Massachusetts province.

"Also unanimously voted, that Thomas Hutchinson, Esq. be empowered to present the said peti-

tion to his majesty, and to appear and fully to act for and in behalf of this town, respecting the subject matter of said petition, according to his best discretion."

Mr. Hutchinson had previously been appointed the agent of Massachusetts, to procure an alteration of the order in Council. He made a voyage to England, but failed to accomplish the object of his agency. It is remarkable that, in his history of Massachusetts, he makes no mention of his appointment.

1741.

At a meeting, held September 7th, the proprietors voted, "that the meeting-house be removed from the place where it now stands, to the most convenient place on the hill, over against the house of Mr. Isaac Clark." This *hill*, which has entirely disappeared, was a conical eminence in the street, one or two rods south of the old Ralston tavern. The meeting-house was accordingly removed thither, and was placed near the centre of the street, the travelled path being east of it.

At the same meeting, it was voted, "that if the collectors shall be obliged to go through a course of law, to recover their collections, and the Massachusetts law, by which we are, or have been supported, should fail, they should be remunerated for their expenses, from the proprietors' treasury."

1742.

July 27, the proprietors voted, that, "whereas there was a vote passed by this propriety, December 4, 1738, to glaze the meeting-house, and set the glass in lead, and to cover the outside with sawed clapboards, we do now, having thought sedately upon it, agree, and vote, to set the glass in wood, and to cover the outside with shingles, for the following reasons: 1, because we judge it stronger; and 2, because we can do it at less expense of money,

which is no small article, not easy to be obtained by us, at this day. And, whereas the proprietors agreed, with the first committee, to make the doors plain, we now agree to have them done otherwise, even framed, or pannel doors, and the north door to be a double folding door, and that the committee agree with a man to do it well, and decently, as becomes such a house."

1744.

January 16, a vote was passed, allowing Jeremiah Hall eight pounds, old tenor, "for getting that 400 pounds, at Boston, of Col. Dudley." This was probably the sum, which the General Court of Massachusetts had directed should be paid to the proprietors, on the erection of a meeting-house.

In March, of this year, war was declared by Great-Britain, against France and Spain, which was soon followed by a war between the colonists and Indians. The dread of savage incursions, increased the labors and distresses of the frontier settlements. The attention of the whites was diverted from the cultivation of their lands, to the defence, and protection, of themselves and families. They dared not perform their usual labors in the field, nor even go far from their forts, without carrying arms, and being accompanied by a guard; and they lived in perpetual apprehension of a sudden attack.

Upper Ashuelot was also visited by a distressing sickness. Between August 1744, and October 1745, a great number died in the township, most of them of the throat distemper.

1745.

At a meeting, held February 5, the proprietors voted, "that the support granted to the Rev. Mr. Bacon, for the year 1 44, being 154 pounds, old tenor, (£130 for salary, and £24 for fire wood) and which, by reason of war and sickness, was neglect-

ed, and not assessed, be brought into the assessment of this year."

In the warrant, calling this meeting, an article was inserted, "to see if the proprietors will seek any further protection, in case the war continues; and if so, to agree upon some method how they will do it." The proprietors "voted, not to act upon this article."

On the 10th of July, deacon Josiah Fisher was killed, as he was driving his cow to pasture. The road leading up the river, then left the main street, by Mr. Samson's tan yard, led along the margin of the meadow, back of his house, crossed West street a few rods west of Aaron Hall's house, and continued up the river, near the adjoining low land, until it came upon the route of the present turnpike above deacon Wilder's house, now occupied as a tavern. Fisher was found dead, and scalped, in the road, near where Mr. Samson's back house stands; and it was supposed that the Indian who shot him, was concealed behind a log, which then lay within the present limits of Mr. Samson's garden. He had a brass slug in his wrist, which, at the time, was conjectured to have been cut from a warming pan, that had lately been lost by one of the inhabitants.

1746.

March 19, the proprietors agreed to raise the sum of forty pounds, lawful money of New-England, (\$133, 33) or one hundred and sixty pounds, old tenor, for the Rev. Mr. Bacon's support the present year. From this vote, it appears that, at this time, old tenor, in comparison with lawful money, was as four to one.

Here occurs a chasm in the proprietors records, which the following relation of events will sufficiently account for.

In the early part of the year, 1746, the General Court of Massachusetts sent a party of men to Canada, for what purpose, is not now recollected,

and perhaps was not generally known. On their return, they passed through Upper Ashuelot. On arriving in sight of the settlement, they fired their guns. This, of course, alarmed the inhabitants, and all who were out, and several were in the woods making sugar, hastened home. From some cause or other, suspicion was entertained, that a party of Indians had followed the returning whites; and for several days the settlers were more vigilant, and more circumspect in their movements; seldom leaving the fort, except to look after their cattle, which were in the barns, and at the stacks, in the vicinity.

Early in the morning of the 23d of April, Ephraim Dorman left the fort to search for his cow. He went northwardly, along the borders of what was then a hideous and almost impervious swamp, lying east of the fort, until he arrived near to the place where the turnpike now is. Looking into the swamp, he perceived several Indians lurking in the bushes. He immediately gave the alarm, by crying, "Indians! Indians!" and ran towards the fort. Two, who were concealed in the bushes, between him and the fort, sprang forward, aimed their pieces at him, and fired, but neither hit him. They then, throwing away their arms, advanced towards him, one he knocked down by a blow, which deprived him of his senses; the other he seized, and being a strong man, and able wrestler, tried his strength, and skill, in his favorite mode of "trip and twitch." He tore his antagonist's blanket from his shoulders, leaving him nearly naked. He then seized him by the arms and body, but as he was painted and greased, he slipped from his grasp. After a short struggle, Dorman quitted him, ran towards the fort and reached it in safety.

When the alarm was given, the greater part of the inhabitants were in the fort; but some had just left it, to attend to their cattle. Capt. Simons, the

commander, as was the custom every morning before prayers, was reading a chapter in the bible. He immediately exclaimed, "rush out, and assist those who are out to get in." Most of the men immediately rushed out, and each ran where his interest or affections led him; the remainder chose positions in the fort, from which they could fire on the enemy.

Those who were out, and within hearing, instantly started for the fort; and the Indians, from every direction, rushed into the street, filling the air with their usual horrid yell. Mrs. M'Kenny had gone to a barn, near where Miss Fiske's house now stands, to milk her cow. She was aged and corpulent, and could only walk slowly. When she was within a few rods of the fort, a naked Indian, probably the one with whom Dorman had been wrestling, darted from the bushes, on the east side of the street, ran up to her, stabbed her in the back, and crossed to the other side. She continued walking, in the same steady pace as before, until she had nearly reached the gate of the fort, when the blood gushed from her mouth, and she fell and expired. John Bullard was at his barn, below Dr. Adams'; he ran towards the fort, but the instant he arrived at the gate, he received a shot in his back. He fell, was carried in, and expired in a few hours. Mrs. Clark was at a barn, near the Todd house, about 50 rods distant. Leaving it, she espied an Indian near her, who threw away his gun, and advanced to make her prisoner. She gathered her clothes around her waist, and started for the fort. The Indian pursued; the woman, animated by cheers from her friends, outran her pursuer, who skulked back for his gun. Nathan Blake was at his barn, near where his son's house now stands. Hearing the cry of Indians, and presuming his barn would be burnt, he determined that his cattle should not be burnt with it. Throwing open his

stable door, he let them loose, and presuming his retreat to the fort was cut off, went out at a back door, intending to place himself in ambush at the only place where the river could be crossed. He had gone but a few steps, when he was hailed by a party of Indians, concealed in a shop between him and the street. Looking back, he perceived several guns pointed at him, and at this instant several Indians started up from their places of concealment near him, upon which, feeling himself in their power, he gave himself up. They shook hands with him, and to the remark he made, that he had not yet breakfasted, they smiling replied, that "it must be a poor Englishman, who could not go to Canada without his breakfast." Passing a cord around his arms above the elbows, and fastening close to his body, they gave him to the care of one of the party, who conducted him to the woods.

The number of Indians, belonging to the party, was supposed to be about 100. They came near the fort, on every side, and fired whenever they supposed their shot would be effectual. They, however, neither killed nor wounded any one. The whites fired whenever an Indian presented himself, and several of them were seen to fall. Before noon, the savages ceased firing, but they remained several days in the vicinity. The guns first fired were heard at the fort in Swanzey, the commander of which immediately sent an express to Winchester, with information that the Indians had made an attack upon Upper Ashuelot. From Winchester an express was sent to the next post, and so on from post to post to Northampton, where Col. Pomeroy commanded. Collecting all the troops, and militia there, and pressing all the horses in the place, he instantly, at their head, set out for Upper Ashuelot, and on his way added to his number all the disposable force in the intermediate settlements. In little more than 48 hours from the time the ex-

press started from Swanzey, he, with 400 or 500 men, arrived at Upper Ashuelot, the distance down and back, being, at least, ninety miles. The arrival, so soon, of this relief, was as unexpected, as it was gratifying to the settlers. The next morning, Pomeroy sent out his men to scour the woods in search of Blake. While these were absent, the Indians again shewed themselves on the meadow, southeast of the fort, where they killed a number of cattle. To recall the troops, an alarm was fired, but was not heard. In the afternoon, they returned unsuccessful, and that evening Mr. Bullard, and Mrs. M'Kenny were buried. The next morning, they found the track of the Indians, and followed it, until they came to the place of their encampment at night. This was east of Buck hill, not far from the present residence of Capt. Chapman. It appearing that they dispersed, when departing from this place, they were pursued no farther. Col. Pomeroy, on his way back to the fort, found that a house, belonging to Mr. Heaton, and standing near the place where his son's house now stands, had been burnt. Among the ashes, they discovered human bones, and the leg of an Indian unconsumed. As it is known to have been the custom of the Indians to take the most effectual means in their power, to conceal the amount of their loss, they had doubtless placed in this house, before they set it on fire, the bodies of such of their party as had been killed, which they had not otherwise concealed. The number, as near as could be ascertained, was nine, and one or two were burnt in the barn of Mr. Blake.

The next day, enquiry was made for Mark Ferry, the hermit. As he did not reside among them, and had never performed the duties of relation, friend or companion to any of the settlers, they felt little solicitude for his fate; but Col. Pomeroy offering to send a party of men, they agreed to

send a pilot to the place where they supposed he might be found. This was Ferry meadow, on the stream called Ferry brook, within the present limits of Sullivan, whither he had repaired, as to a place of safety, when driven by the flood from his cave on Bullard's island. They found his horse confined under the shelter of the root of a fallen tree, and, looking further, espied him perched high upon the limb of a large tree, mending his clothes. His personal appearance indicated that he had not received the benefit of shaving, nor ablution, for months. They compelled him to descend, brought him to the fort, led him to the officers' quarters, and, with mock formality, introduced him to all the officers, and gentlemen of the party.

Apprehending no farther danger to the settlers, Col. Pomeroy and his men returned to their homes.

In the early part of May, the same, or another party of Indians, hovered about the settlement, watching for an opportunity to make prisoners, and to plunder. For several successive nights, the watch imagined that they heard some person walking around the fort. When it came to the turn of young M'Kenny, whose mother had been killed, to watch, he declared he should fire, on hearing the least noise without the fort. In the dead of night, he thought he heard some person at the picket gate, endeavoring to ascertain its strength. Having loaded his gun, as was usual among the first settlers of the country, with two balls and several buck shot, he fired through the gate, which was made of thin boards. In the morning blood was discovered on the spot, and also a number of beads, supposed to have been cut, by the shot, from the wampum of the Indian.

The inhabitants remained in the fort until March, or April, 1747. About this time, they passed an informal vote, releasing Mr. Bacon, their minister, from all his obligations to them, and resolved to

abandon the settlement, which resolution was immediately executed. Soon after, a party of Indians visited the place, and burnt all the buildings, except the mill on Beaver brook, and the house in which the miller had resided.

It has been already mentioned, that Mr. Blake, when captured, was pinioned, and conducted by an Indian into the woods. After travelling about two miles, they came to a small stony brook. The Indian stooped to drink, and as Blake's hands were not confined, he thought he could easily take up a stone, and beat out his brains. He silently prayed for direction; and his next thought was, that he should always regret that he had killed an Indian in that situation, and he refrained.

No particulars of his journey to Canada have been obtained, except that he passed by Charlestown. At Montreal, he, with another prisoner of the name of Warren, was compelled to run the gauntlet. Warren, receiving a blow in the face, knocked down the Indian who gave it; upon which, he was assaulted by several, who beat him unmercifully, making him a cripple for life. Blake, exhibiting more patience and fortitude, received no considerable injury. He was then conducted to Quebec, and thence to an Indian village, several miles north of that place, called Ccnissadawga. He was a strong, athletic man, and possessed many qualities, which procured him the respect of the savages. He could run with great speed, and in all the trials to which he was put, and they were many and severe, he beat every antagonist.

Not long after his arrival at the village, the tribe lost a chief by sickness. As soon as his decease was made known, the women repaired to his wigwam, and with tears, sobs, and clamorous lamentations, mourned his death. The funeral ceremonies performed, the men sought Blake, dressed him in

the Indian costume, and invested him with all the authority and privileges of the deceased, as one of the chiefs of the tribe, and as husband of the widow. In the family to which he now stood in the relation of father, there were, as he has often remarked, several daughters of uncommon beauty.

Yet, notwithstanding this good fortune, he still had difficulties to encounter. The tribe was divided into two parties, his friends and his enemies. The former consisted of the great mass of the tribe, who respected him for qualities, to which, they had not equal pretensions; the latter, of those who were envious of his success, and had been worsted in their contests with him. These, to humble his pride, sent far into the northern wilderness, and procured a celebrated Indian runner, to run against him. At the time assigned, the whole tribe assembled to witness the race; and a Frenchman, from Quebec, happened to be present. Perceiving the excitement among them, he advised Blake to permit himself to be beaten, intimating that fatal consequences might ensue, if he did not. The race was run, and Blake, as advised by the Frenchman, permitted his antagonist to reach the goal, a moment before he did. He persisted, however, after his return from captivity, in declaring that he might have beaten him, if he had tried. The event of the race, restored harmony to the tribe, and Blake was permitted to live in peace.

But, remembering the family he had left, he felt anxious to return to his home. After much intercession, the tribe proposed, that, if he would build a house, like those of the English, he should be permitted to go to Quebec. Presuming, that, when there, he could more easily obtain his liberty, he gladly acceded to the proposition. With such tools as the Indians possessed, he prepared the necessary timber, splitting the boards from the tree, and soon completed the task. He then went to Que-

bec, and gave himself up to the French. He had been there but a short time, when his Indian wife came in a canoe to reclaim him. He refused to return; but she soliciting and even demanding it, he declared to her, that, if he should be compelled to set out with her, he would overturn the canoe, and drown her; upon which, she concluded to return without him. In the fall, the French commandant gave Blake his election to pass the winter, as a laborer, with a farmer, in the vicinity of Quebec, or be confined in the common gaol. He chose the latter, and had no reason to regret his choice, as he had a comfortable room, and sufficient rations assigned him. He remained in confinement until spring, when his liberation was procured in the manner, which will now be related.

Among the numerous parties, which the love of war, and of adventure, brought upon the frontier settlements, was one consisting of a small number of Indians, commanded by lieutenant Pierre Rambout, a young Frenchman. In the autumn of 1747, this party penetrated the wilderness, as far as the southern bank of the Ashuelot, in Winchester, about two miles below the village. They then halted, and the commander, taking his gun, passed alone over a neighboring hill, which descended abruptly to the southward. While standing near a road, which led along the foot of the hill, he saw, and, at the same moment, was seen by a scout, consisting of Mr. Alexander, and Mr. Willard, of Northfield, and Dr. Hall, of Keene, who were then travelling this road, in a direction towards Northfield. Perceiving that he could not escape, he, in French, asked for quarter. Not understanding him, Alexander fired, and he fell. On examination, they concluded his wound was mortal, took his arms, and presuming he had a party near him, which would be drawn to the spot, by the report of the musket, they hastened to Northfield. The Indians

repaired immediately to the spot, and finding their commander wounded, but yet alive, they removed him to the bank of the river, where he had left them. Supposing his wound was mortal, and alarmed for their own safety, they then left him, and returned precipitately to Canada, informing his father, a wealthy old gentleman, who resided near Quebec, that his son had been killed by the English.

Rambout remained as he was left, until the next morning. Feeling his strength revive, he then attempted to rise, and, after several efforts, succeeded. Prompted by the love of life, he then determined to endeavor to reach some settlement, and give himself up. Wandering about, he at length came to the road leading to Northfield, then about five miles distant. This road he followed, and with much difficulty reached that place. The man whom he first saw, was Alexander, who had shot him, and to him he surrendered himself. Alexander immediately conveyed him to the house of Mr. Doolittle, who was then surgeon, physician, and clergyman, of the place, where he was carefully attended to, and his wound completely cured. He was an interesting young man, and, by his behavior, gained the respect, and affection of the inhabitants.

During the winter, he made a visit to Boston. He was very anxious to return to Canada; and the relatives and friends of Samuel Allen, a young man, who had been captured, at Deerfield, in 1746, were desirous of procuring his release, in exchange for Rambout. Application was therefore made to the governor of Massachusetts, who consented to send a party, with a flag, to Canada, to negotiate the exchange. Rambout also engaged, that some other English prisoners should be released, in exchange for him. As he was an officer, considerable reliance was placed upon this engagement; and

it was agreed that, should it be ratified by the governor of Canada, the other prisoner should be Mr. Blake.

The party consisted of John Hawks, Matthew Elisson, and John Taylor. Hawks was one of the proprietors, though not an inhabitant of Keene; he commanded fort Massachusetts, near Hoosack, when it was taken, in 1746, and had just returned from captivity; he was an active officer in all the Indians wars of this period, and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel, in the war of 1756.

Considering it possible that the French governor might refuse to ratify the engagement of the lieutenant, Mrs. Blake furnished Hawks with funds to redeem her husband. The party, accompanied by Rambout, set out from Deerfield, for Canada, in February, 1748. The season was inclement, and the snow was deep. They travelled on snow shoes, and carried their provisions on their backs. At night, they encamped on the snow, in the Indian mode, and often, without shelter or covering. Their route led up the Connecticut, to Charlestown; thence up Black river, to the present town of Ludlow; thence over the highlands, in Mount Holly, to a branch of Otter Creek; thence down Otter Creek, about twenty-four miles; thence a westerly course, until they struck a stream, which they followed to its junction with Lake Champlain, opposite Ticonderoga; thence on the ice of the lake, by Crown-Point, to Canada.

At Montreal, Rambout was delivered to the French commander, and search was made for young Allen, who was at length found among the Indians; and though he had resided with them only eighteen months, yet, unaccountable as it may appear, he had become strongly attached to their mode of life, displayed great aversion to returning home, and even attempted to avoid his deliverers. When brought into the presence of Col. Hawks,

he acknowledged, with reluctance, that he recognized him, though he was his uncle, and had been well known to him, at Deerfield—nor would he converse in English. Various means were used to weaken his strange predilection, but all without effect, and his obstinacy was only conquered by threats, and force. Nor did his Indian attachments cease in his old age ; and he often declared, that the Indian mode of life was the most happy.

After obtaining Allen, Hawks, and his party, proceeded to Quebec. On their way, they stopped at the house of old Rambout, whose feelings may be imagined, when he saw, standing before him, that son whom he believed to be dead. Unwilling to be delayed, Hawks promised to visit him again, on his return. Arriving at Quebec, he made application for the release of Blake, according to the engagement of Rambout. The governor refused, alleging that the lieutenant had no authority to make such an engagement. Hawks persisted in urging his claim, as a matter of right. He also appealed to his feelings, as a man, representing to him the forlorn situation of Mrs. Blake, and the expectations she had been permitted to indulge, and prayed that he might not be sent back to her, the messenger of disappointment. The governor still refusing, he declared that he could not return to her without her husband ; and requested to know what sum was required as his ransom, adding that he would endeavor to pay it. The governor, pausing a moment, replied, “ take him, and keep your money.”

Expressing his gratitude, Hawks hastened to the prison, and gave to Blake the glad tidings of his release. On their way to New-England, the party again stopped at the house of old Rambout. The neighbors were invited ; a sumptuous feast was prepared ; “ wine,” to use the language of Blake, “ was as plenty as water ;” the evening, and the

night, were spent in dancing ; the happy father and mother opening the ball, and displaying all the liveliness of youth. Quebec, it should be remembered, had then been settled nearly a century and a half, and was far in advance of all the English colonies in refinement of manners. To the rough and sedate Englishmen, who had seldom been out of the woods, the whole scene was novel, and excited emotions, to which they had not been accustomed.

Hawks, and his party, then proceeded on their journey. Apprehending that the savages would pursue them, and attempt to release young Allen, which they had shewn a strong inclination to do, lieutenant Rambout accompanied them a part of the way. In the beginning of May, 1748, they arrived at their homes.

In October, 1748, peace was declared between England and France. The Indians, however, continued their depredations until June, 1749, and a treaty of peace was not made with them, until September of that year.

On the restoration of peace, the settlers who had been driven from their lands, by the war, made preparations to return. The exact time when Upper Ashuelot was again occupied, has not been ascertained. It was, probably, some time in 1750 ; certainly as early as 1751 ; as it is within the recollection of Thomas Wells, now living, who came to reside here in 1752, that eight or ten dwelling houses had then been erected.

1753.

On the 11th of April, the proprietors, on application to Benning Wentworth, then governor of New-Hampshire, obtained a charter, granting them the land embraced in the original limits of Upper Ashuelot, and a small additional strip on the eastern side. The preamble recites that, "Whereas sundry of our loving subjects, before the settlement

of the dividing line of our Province of New-Hampshire, and our other government of the Massachusetts Bay, had by permission of our said government of Massachusetts Bay, begun a settlement of a tract of land on Ashuelot river, and made sundry divisions of, and improvements upon, said tract, and there remained until the Indian war forced them off, and being desirous to make an immediate settlement upon the premises, and having petitioned our governor in council for his majesty's grant of the premises to be so made as might not subvert and destroy their former surveys;" therefore a grant is made to them of the said tract, they are constituted a corporation by the name of KEENE, and the inhabitants are declared entitled to all the privileges, and immunities, that other towns in the province, exercise and enjoy. A reservation is made of all white, and other pine trees, fit for masting the royal navy, and of a rent of one ear of Indian corn, annually, until 1763, and afterwards, of one shilling, proclamation money, for every hundred acres. And Benjamin Bellows is authorized to call the first meeting of the proprietors, and inhabitants.

The first meeting of the proprietors, under this charter, was held at Keene, on the first Wednesday of May. Votes were passed, granting to Benjamin Bellows 122 Spanish milled dollars, for his services and expenses, in obtaining the charter; and to Ephraim Dorman 8 dollars for going to Portsmouth—raising 22 pounds, old tenor, to procure preaching; and granting to Theodore Atkinson, the secretary of the Province, three hundred acres of land.

On the same day, a town meeting was held, and various town officers were chosen.

The inhabitants immediately directed their attention to the concerns of religion. As a place for public worship, they erected a building, on a green plat, near the house of Aaron Appleton. It was

built of slabs, the earth serving as a floor. And, with the inhabitants of Swanzev, they made a joint arrangement for the settlement of a pastor.

In the warrant, calling a town meeting, to be held June 13, is the following article : "to see if they (the freeholders, &c.) will make choice of the Rev. Mr. Carpenter for our minister." From the expressions, here used, it is probable that the church had already acted on the subject. At the meeting, Mr. Carpenter was chosen ; the sum of " fifty pounds, silver money, at six shillings and eight pence the ounce, or equivalent in our own province bills," was offered him as a settlement ; and the town engaged to find him, yearly, twenty cords of fire wood. A contract was subsequently made with Mr. Carpenter, which was to continue in force three years, and, in which, it was stipulated that he should receive, from Keene, a salary of twenty-six pounds, lawful money. He also officiated as the minister of Swanzev.

In December, the inhabitants voted, to build a meeting house, 45 feet long, and 35 wide ; and agreed to set it at " the crotch of the roads, so called, one road leading up the river, and the other across the river to Ash swamp." This place must have been several rods west of Aaron Hall's house.

1754.

In January, of the next year, " in consideration of the unfitness of the ground, and the exposedness to fire, and to the enemy, in case of a war," they voted, to set the house " on the road that goeth from the town street to the mills, on the highest ground, between the causeway, by William Smeed's, and the Bridge, by the clay pits." Smeed lived where Dr. Twitchell now does, and the bridge was north of Col. Perry's store.

In this year, the savages again committed acts of hostility. Sometime in the fall, an express arrived at

Keene, bringing information, that a party of the enemy had appeared in the vicinity of Penacook, (Concord,) where they had killed, and captured, several whites. This was in the afternoon. The inhabitants immediately assembled, and appointed several persons to keep guard, through the night, directing them to walk, continually, from the house of David Nims, (near Lewis Page's house, in prison street,) to the meadow gate, (near Mr. Carpenter's;) and agreed immediately to complete the fort, the re-building of which had already been commenced. The next day every one able to labor, went to work upon the fort, and soon prepared it for the reception of the settlers.

1755.

When traces of Indians were discovered, near any of the frontier posts, it was the custom to fire, as an alarm to all within hearing, three guns in regular and quick succession. If heard at any of the posts, it was answered in the same manner; if not answered, the alarm was repeated. In June, the people at Westmoreland, discovering traces of Indians, fired an alarm, which was heard at Keene. A body of men was immediately sent to their relief; but they returned without discovering the enemy. That they were lurking in the vicinity, and that they followed home the party from Keene, is probable, as, the next day, they captured Benjamin Twitchell. He had been to Ash swamp; on his return, he took with him a tub, which, it is supposed, he carried upon his head. This tub was afterwards found, on the east bank of the river, near where the mills now stand; and there the Indians probably seized him. He was conducted up the river; in the meadows, west and north of deacon Wilder's, the Indians killed several oxen, a horse and colt. The colt was cut up, and the best pieces of meat carried off. In this meadow, they left a bow, made of lever wood, and several arrows. They encamped, for the night,

in M'Curdy's meadow, in Surry, where four crotched sticks were discovered driven into the ground, in such positions, as led to the belief, that to each was confined one of the limbs of the prisoner. The party then proceeded to Quebec, where Twitchell met with Josiah Foster and his family, who were captured at Winchester. For the honor of Foster, the particulars of his capture should be recorded. Returning home, one evening, he found his house in the possession of Indians, who had captured his wife and children. He could have escaped, but he determined to give himself up, that he might share their fate, and have an opportunity to alleviate their sufferings. He accompanied them to Quebec, carrying his wife on his back, a great part of the way. There they remained until, being ransomed, they were sent, by water, to Boston. Twitchell was put on board the same vessel, but, being taken sick, he was set on shore, and died in a few days.

A month or two afterwards, a party of Indians were discovered in the meadow, south of the town line, by the people of Swanzey. They, with four soldiers to guard them, were coming, in a body, and armed, to work in their north meadows. The soldiers who were in advance, heard a rustling in the bushes, and one, supposing it caused by a deer, fired his musket at the spot. The Indians, supposing they were discovered, rose, and fired at the soldiers, who, frightened, ran to the quarter, now called Scotland. The people, coming up, saw the Indians, attacked them and drove them to the plain, west of the factory. An express was instantly sent to Keene ; and a party of 15 men, under Capt. Metcalf, went out to meet them. This party went first to the foot of the hill, beyond Mr. Heaton's, supposing the Indians would there cross the branch. Remaining there a short time, without discovering any Indians, a Mr. Howard proposed to go to an-

other ford still farther up. Josiah French, a shrewd man, observed, "those who wish to meet with the Indians, had better stay here : I feel no desire to see them, and will go over the hill with Howard." It was agreed to go over the hill ; but no sooner had they reached the top of the nearest eminence, than they discovered nine Indians crossing at the ford they had left. They lay in wait for them a few hours, but did not see them afterwards. Returning to the fort, Howard received no mercy from the men, women and children within it. Several days afterwards, the men went, in a body, and armed, to hoe Mr. Day's corn, near Surry, and discovered that an old house, in that neighborhood, had been burnt ; it was supposed to have been set on fire by the same party of Indians,

Afterwards, but in what year is not recollected, another, and the last party of Indians made a visit to Keene. The inhabitants had cleared and fenced a large common field consisting of about two hundred acres, laying southwardly of Mrs. Lanman's house. This field was used as a cow pasture, and the access to it was by a path which led southwardly along the high ground east of the place where the turnpike and Baker's lane unite. When driving their cows to this pasture, it was the custom of the inhabitants not to go in the path, for fear of a surprise, but on one or the other side of it. Early one morning, they came suddenly upon a party of Indians, concealed in thick bushes, and busily engaged in mending their moccasins. They instantly started up and escaped. It was afterwards ascertained that the leather, with which they were mending their moccasins, had been stolen, the night before, from a tannery at Walpole or Charlestown.

1756.

The term for which Mr. Carpenter was settled having expired, the town October 5, 1756, voted

"to carry on and maintain the worship and ordinances of God in unity with the people of Swanzev, in the manner we have for three years past, for the space of one year to come."

1760.

A similar vote was annually past until 1760, when the town "voted not to join with the people of Swanzev in maintaining and carrying on the worship and ordinances of God."

In the warrant calling for a town meeting to be held the 31st day of December, 1760, an article was inserted, to see if the town will give a gentleman a call in order to settle in the work of ministry among us." The proceedings of this meeting, and also of another meeting held February 16, 1761, are lost. But from the proceedings of a meeting held March 26, 1761, it appears that the town had given a call to the worthy Mr. Clement Sumner." His salary was fixed at thirty-five pounds sterling and his fire-wood, with an annual increase of one pound ten shillings sterling, until fifteen pounds should be added. The amount of his settlement is not known.

1761.

In April, the town voted, "that the Rev. Mr. Sumner's salary be stated on commodities as they be now and so from year to year. Commodities as they be now : wheat at 3s. 2 1-2d. sterling per bushel; pork at 3d. per pound; beef at 2d. per pound; Indian corn at 1s. 8d. per bushel; rye at 2s. 6d. per bushel; labour in the summer at 2s. per day." This was afterwards rescinded upon the suggestion of Mr. Sumner, that the article of beef was stated above the market price.

Mr. Sumner accepted the call, and the ordination took place on the 11th of June.

For several years from this period, but few interesting facts can be gleaned from written documents, or from oral tradition.

Amos Foster, an inhabitant, of the town died this year. In his will he bequeathed one half of his estate to the town. The value of the legacy is not known; but in August the town voted that Mr. Sumner's settlement, and his salary for the first year, should be paid from this fund.

In September, the town voted to build a house for sick soldiers.

1762.

Among the town officers chosen this year was a clerk of the market, and a deer reif. Whether the former had any duties to perform is not known. It was the duty of the latter to enforce the laws against killing deer in the spring. The first office was annually filled for the succeeding ten years, and the latter until 1782.

1764.

At the annual meeting this year, the town voted six pounds sterling to defray the charges of a school.

1765.

By a vote of the town, each man was to be allowed for labour on the highway, two shillings and six-pence (probably lawful money) per day, until the last of September, and afterwards, two shillings per day; one shilling for a yoke of oxen, and six-pence for a cart.

1766.

The following votes are found on the records of this year.

"Voted, that Benjamin Hall be agent to represent the town in behalf of a shire town.

"Voted, that the security for the money given to the town by Capt. Nathaniel Fairbanks, deceased, the interest of which was for the use of a school in this town, be delivered to the care of the town treasurer, and his successors in office for the time being."

1767.

According to an enumeration made the 7th of October, the number and description of inhabitants were as follows :

Unmarried men from 16 to 60	51
Married men from 16 to 60	66
Boys from 16 and under	84
Men upwards of 60	4
Females unmarried	146
Married women	68
Widows	8

Total, 427

1768.

Josiah Willard was chosen to represent the town in the General Assembly at Portsmouth. He was the first representative chosen.

1770.

The town was now first divided into school districts, being four in number.

1771.

This year, the state, which before consisted of but one county, was divided into five, and Keene was made one of the shire towns for the county of Cheshire. The Inferior Court held its first session here, in October, 1771, and the Superior Court, in September, 1772.

1772.

The inhabitants, having become dissatisfied with the Rev. Clement Sumner, he was this year dismissed, in pursuance of a vote of the town, his own consent, and the result of an ecclesiastical council.

1773.

The following muster roll has been handed to the compiler, by a veteran of the revolution :

A List of the Foot Company in Keene.

Lieut. Benjamin Hall, Ensign, Michael Metcalf, Clerk, Simeon Clark, Serj. Elijah Blake, Serj. Thomas Baker, Serj. Isaac Esley, Serj. Jedidiah Carpenter, Corp. Dan Guild, Corp. Joseph Blake, Corp. Abijah Metcalf, Benjamin Archer, Jonathan Archer, Asael Blake, John Brown, Elisha Briggs, John Balch, Benjamin Balch, jr. Luther Bragg, Samuel Bassett, John Burt, Nathan Blake, jr. Obadiah Blake, jr. Rial Blake, Naboth Bettison, Thomas Baker, jr. John Pray Blake, Cephas Clark, Seth Clark, Eliphalet Carpenter, Ebenezer Carpenter, Samuel Chapman, Silas Cook, Isaac Clark, Simeon Clark, jr. Jonas Clark, John Day, jr. John Daniels, Reuben Daniels, John Dickson, Adington Daniels, Ebenezer Day, jr. Jacob Day,	James Dean, Timothy Crossfield, Joseph Elles, jr. Gideon Elles, jr. Simeon Elles, Timothy Elles, 3d. William Elles, Caleb Elles, Stephen Estey, James Eady, Henry Elles, Benjamin Elles, Benjamin Elles, jr. Joshua Elles, Jabez Fisher, Silas French, David Foster, jr. Peter Fiskin, Aaron Gray, jr. William Goodenow, John Griggs, Joseph Gray, Samuel Hall, Jesse Hall, Peter Hubbard, Seth Heaton, jr. John Houghton, Joseph Hills, Davis Howlett, Ziba Hall, Jonathan Heaton, Luther Heaton, Nathaniel Kingsbury, Daniel Kingsbury, Stephen Rarrabee, Daniel Lake, Ezra Metcalf, Jonathan Metcalf, Moses Marsh, Eli Metcalf, Daniel Metcalf, William Nelson,	David Nims, jr. Ebenezer Nuton, Asael Nims, Eliakim Nims, Zadock Nims, Alpheus Nims, Joshua Osgood, Benjamin Osgood, jr. Amos Partridge, Jonathan Pond, Abiather Pond, Nathan Rugg, Josiah Richardson, Eleazer Sanger, Abner Sanger, Robert Penser, Jeremiah Stiles, Richard Smith, John Swan, Jacob Town, Joseph Thatcher, Abraham Wheeler, jr. Joseph Willson, William Woods, Oliver Wright, Jedidiah Wellman, David Willson, Daniel Willson, Thomas Wells, John White, James Wright, Zadock Wheeler, Walter Wheeler, Samuel Wadsworth, Abijah Wilder, Jonathan Wheeler, Thomas Wilder, Thomas Morse, Ephraim Leonard, Peter Daniels, Luke Metcalf, Isaac Wyman, jr.
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To Col. JOSIAH WILLARD.

EPHRAIM DORMAN, C.

Keene, August 7, 1773.

Errors Excepted.

The Alarm List belonging to Keene.

Lieut. Seth Heaton, Dea. David Foster, John Day, Abraham Wheeler, Nathan Blake, Joseph Ellis, Uriah Willson, Ebenezer Nims, David Nims, Gideon Ellis, Lieut. Andrew Balch, Aaron Gray, Ebenezer Day, Eliphalet Briggs, Benjamin Archer,	Capt. Isaac Wyman, Doct. Obadiah Blake, Lieut. Timothy Ellis, Thomas Friuk, Esq. Doct. Josiah Pomeroy, Doct. Gideon Tiffany, Elijah Williams, Israel Houghton, Samuel Woods, Samuel Daniels, Jesse Clark, Joseph Brown, Robert Gillmore, Obadiah Hamilton, Peter Rice,	Elisha Ellis, Isaac Billings, Josiah Ellis, Timothy Ellis, Jun. Ichabod Fisher, William Gray, Benjamin Hall, Jun. Benjamin Osgood, Nathaniel Hall, Samuel Woods, Jun. John Coulee, Samuel Colhoon, Ebenezer Cooke, Daniel Snow, Eliphalet Briggs, Jun.
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From votes of the town, it appears that Nathaniel Niles and Augustine Hibbert preached this year, as candidates for settlement ; and that, in

1774,

William Fessenden and Elias Jones preached also as candidates. To the latter, the town unanimously gave a call, and offered him £133 6s. 8d. as a settlement, and seventy five pounds as an annual salary. What answer he gave to the call does not appear.

Elijah Williams, Esquire, an attorney at law, who came to Keene, in 1771, was, this year, appointed a justice of the peace, as appears from the following precept.

*Province of New-Hampshire, }
Portsmouth, 28th May, 1774. }*

To Mr. Simeon Jones, Clerk of his majesty's court of General Sessions of the peace, for the county of Cheshire, in said Province.

I am commanded by his Excellency the Governor, to direct that you enter, in the general commission of the Peace, for said county, the name of Elijah Williams, Esquire, who is appointed, by his Excellency, a Justice of the peace, for said county. You'l, therefore, hereby take order accordingly.

By his Excellency's command,

THEODORE ATKINSON, *Sec'ry.*

The discussions and excitement, which preceded the revolutionary war, began, about this time, to extend to the interior towns. In Keene, nearly all the inhabitants were decided whigs ; but a few were neutral or silent, and a very small number were avowed tories. Against the two last classes, the popular indignation was often directed, and sometimes with such irregular violence, as called for the interposition of the sober and considerate citizens.

In a warrant, calling a town meeting, to be held the 26th of September, the following articles were

inserted: "To see if it be the mind of the town to provide ammunition for a town stock, and grant money for the same." And "to see if it be the mind of the town to sign the covenant and engagement, which was sent and recommended, by the committee of correspondence, relating to the non-importation agreement."

Upon the first article, the town "voted, to get a stock of ammunition for the town, viz. 200*lbs.* of good gun powder, 400*lbs.* of lead, and 1200 flints; and to raise twenty-four pounds, lawful money, for providing said articles."

Upon the other article, the following preamble and vote were adopted: "Whereas the towns, in this province, have chosen members to represent them in a General Congress of all the colonies, now sitting, at the city of Philadelphia, to consult and determine what steps are necessary for the colonies to adopt, voted, therefore, not to sign the non-importation agreement, until we hear what measures said congress have agreed upon for themselves and their constituents."

October 17th, Capt. Isaac Wyman, and Lieutenant Timothy Ellis, were chosen delegates to attend the county congress, at Walpole. No information, concerning the object or proceedings of this congress, has been obtained.

1775.

On the 4th of January, at a legal town meeting, the inhabitants voted, "to come into the measures recommended by the Continental Congress, in their association agreement." They chose, agreeably to said advice, Isaac Wyman, Timothy Ellis, Thomas Baker, Dan Guild, and William Ellis, a committee of Inspection. They also chose Isaac Wyman to represent the town, at the meeting, to be held at Exeter, on the 21st day of said January, for the choice of delegates to the Continental Congress.

At a town meeting, held February 23, Captain Isaac Wyman was chosen "to represent the town

in the general assembly, holden at Portsmouth, on said 23d day of February, and so, day by day, during their sessions."

On the 19th of April, was fought the battle of Lexington. An aged gentleman, then an inhabitant of Keene, gives the following account of the proceedings of the citizens, on that occasion. The instant that news of the battle arrived in town, which was in the forenoon, Capt. Dorman, who then commanded the militia, called upon Capt. Wyman. "The regulars," said he, "have come out to Concord, have killed six men, and the battle was raging when the messenger started. What shall be done?" "Send expresses," said Capt. Wyman, "to every part of the town, notifying the inhabitants to meet, forthwith, on the green, and be governed by their decision." Expresses were sent, the citizens met, in the afternoon, and a vote was unanimously passed, that a body of men should be sent to oppose the regulars. The question was asked, who shall lead them? Capt. Wyman was nominated, was chosen, and though far advanced in years, cheerfully consented to go. Volunteers were then called for, and about thirty presented themselves. Capt. Wyman directed them to go home immediately, and prepare provisions for their use, for, said he, "all the roads will be full of men, and you can procure nothing on the way; and he appointed sunrise, the next morning, the time, and his house, the place of rendezvous. At sunrise they met, and immediately started for Concord. In the afternoon, Gen. Bellows, Col. John Bellows, and Thomas Sparhawk arrived from Walpole, and riding to his house, enquired for Capt. Wyman. Being answered, that he started at sunrise, at the head of a company of men, they exclaimed, "Keene has shown a noble spirit!" and hastened onwards. They were soon followed by a party of men from Walpole.

At an informal meeting of the inhabitants, held the 27th of April, they chose Timothy Ellis a delegate to meet the committee, at Exeter, and to sit, as a member, in the provincial congress, whenever they convene. He expressed his willingness to accept the office, but declared that he had not, and could not, in season, procure money enough to bear his expenses. The inhabitants, thereupon, voted, that he might draw from the treasury four pounds, lawful money.

Soon after the battle of Lexington, several Tories, among whom was Elijah Williams, Esq. left this vicinity, and joined the British, in Boston.

In the warrant calling a town meeting, on the 7th day of December, one of the articles was, "to see if it be the mind of the town, that the names of those persons, who buy, sell, or make use of bohea tea, be advertised in the public prints." At the meeting, held on the day appointed, this article passed in the negative; but a committee of inspection was appointed to see that the resolves of the Continental Congress be complied with. After dismissing two other articles, relating to the troubles of that period, the town unanimously adopted the following Resolves, which may be termed the Statute Law of Keene. And here it may be proper to state, that no judicial courts were held in the county, from 1774 to 1778.

"Whereas, by the unhappy disputes now subsisting between Great-Britain and the American Colonies, the laws of several of them have been entirely subverted, or wholly neglected, to the great detriment of society, and of individuals, whereby, many disorderly persons, taking undue advantage of the times, and taking upon them the name of liberty, as a cloak to put their revengeful designs in execution, do wickedly and maliciously threaten to abuse and destroy the persons and property

of many of the good and wholesome inhabitants of the land, and the Executive power being thrown by ; and the Congresses, neither Continental or provincial, have, as yet, found out, or published, any method or system of government, for the security of our persons or property ; and until such a system as they in their wisdom shall see fit, or some other, be proposed—

“ We, the inhabitants of the town of Keene, in the County of Cheshire, and province of New-Hampshire, legally convened, being desirous of order and good government, and for the security of our lives, persons, and property, do pass the following Resolves :

“ 1st. It is resolved, that a committee of three good and steady men of the town, be chosen to act upon, and a proper officer appointed, to prosecute the Resolves hereafter mentioned.

“ 2d. Whereas, profane cursing and swearing are highly provoking to Almighty God, and offensive to every true christian, which we fear, if not discountenanced, will provoke the Divine Majesty to bring heavy judgments upon us, and still heavier, deliver us up to the desire of our enemies ; to prevent cursing and swearing, be it Resolved, that if any person, or persons, shall profanely curse or swear, and shall be thereof convicted, before the committee, by sufficient witnesses, or by confession of the party, every such offender shall forfeit, and pay to the committee, for the use of the poor of said town, a sum not exceeding three shillings, nor less than one ; according to the repeatedness of the offence ; and pay cost of prosecution, which cost shall be ascertained by the committee, before whom the person shall be convicted ; and in case any person, convicted as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the sum or sums, so forfeited and adjudged, he, she or they shall be immediately committed to the com-

mon goal, not exceeding ten days, nor less than three, for said forfeiture, and until he pay all just costs.

“ 3d. Whereas, it is highly necessary that every person, of able body, should betake himself to some honest calling, and not misspend their time, in loitering and tippling, in licensed houses, or elsewhere, in this town; to prevent which,

“ Be it resolved, that if any person or persons, fit and able to work, shall refuse so to do, but loiter and misspend his or their time, wander from place to place, or otherwise disorder themselves, by drinking or tippling in any of the licensed houses, or elsewhere, in this town, after nine o'clock at night, or continue in any of the aforesaid houses above the space of one hour, unless on necessary business, all such persons, being convicted of any of the aforesaid articles, before said committee, by sufficient witnesses, shall, for every such offence, forfeit and pay to the said committee, for the use of the poor of said town, the sum of two shillings, and all just costs of trial, which shall be adjudged by said committee, and in case any person, convicted as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the sum or sums, so forfeited and adjudged, he, or they, shall be committed to the common goal, there to remain not exceeding ten days, nor less than three days for said forfeiture, and until he pay all just costs.

“ 4th. Whereas, personal abuse tends to promote ill blood and discord among society, to prevent which, be it Resolved, that if any person or persons shall smite, or strike, or threaten to abuse, or destroy, the person or property of another, he or they, so offending, shall, for the first offence, pay to the said committee, for the use of the poor of said town, the sum of five shillings, and costs of prosecution, and double that sum for the second offence; and for the third, or any after offence, shall be imprisoned, or publicly whipt, according to the judg-

ment of the committee, before whom they are convicted ; and in case any person, being convicted as aforesaid, shall refuse to pay the sum or sums, so forfeited and adjudged, he or they shall be committed to the common goal, there to remain, not exceeding ten days, nor less than four, for said forfeiture, and until he pay all just costs.

“ *5th.* Further, be it Resolved, that if any person, or persons, shall presume to purchase, or bring into this town, any teas, of what sort soever, until the minds of the Congress, respecting that article, shall be fully known, shall, forthwith, deliver up such teas to one or more of the committee, to be stored by them and kept for the owner, until the minds of the Congress be known respecting that matter ; and in case any person shall refuse to deliver up said teas, the committee have power to imprison him until he does.

“ *6th.* And for the better execution of all and every the foregoing articles, it is resolved, that all and each of the said committee shall have full power and authority to bring before them any of the inhabitants of this town, or any person residing in said town, that shall offend in any of the foregoing resolves, and upon his or their own views, or other sufficient conviction of any such offence, to impose the fine and penalty for the same, and to commit the offender until it be satisfied.

“ *7th.* It is likewise Resolved, that the officer appointed shall have power and authority to carry any person, that shall be found trespassing in any of the foregoing particulars, before said committee for trial, and if need be, may command aid and assistance in discharging his trust ; and any person refusing to give aid or assistance, as aforesaid, he or they shall forfeit the sum of three shillings for every offence, and have their names inserted in the public Gazette, as unfriendly to good order.

"And all masters and heads of families, in this town, are hereby directed to take effectual care that their children, servants, and others under their immediate government, do no trespass, in any of the foregoing particulars."

"Chose Thomas Baker, Eliphalet Briggs and Dan Guild, as a committee to judge, determine, and act upon said Resolves, and put them in execution, and chose Elijah Blake officer for the purpose mentioned in said Resolves."

The town voted, 37 to 27, to give Mr. John Remele a call to settle as a minister. They offered him £133 6s. 8d. as a settlement, and 75 pounds as a salary. His reply was, "that the town had offered generously enough for his support, but he could not think it his duty to settle in any place, where there was so much opposition."

The population of Keene, this year, was 756.

1776.

The representatives of the General Assembly, having desired their constituents to nominate justices of the peace, the inhabitants, April 3d, "voted, unanimously, that it is the mind of this town that Col. Isaac Wyman be appointed."

August 2d, "Capt. Eliphalet Briggs was chosen a delegate, to meet with other delegates, at Walpole, to consult and agree upon such methods as shall be thought necessary for the general good, and our mutual defence and safety." This convention was called by order of a sub-committee of the several committees of safety in the county.

The small pox having been introduced into the town, hospitals had been erected, where such persons as chose to resort to them, were inoculated. This disease, it seems, had been spread by persons leaving the hospitals without being sufficiently cleansed; whereupon, at a town meeting, held September 27, eleven resolves were passed, prescribing strict regulations for the government of the

hospitals. Eliphalet Briggs, mentioned in the preceding paragraph, a worthy citizen, and staunch whig, died of this disease, and was buried at the foot of the hill, on the road leading to Roxbury. In December, Jeremiah Stiles was chosen one of the committee of safety in his stead.

1777.

In the beginning of this year, Samuel Whitman preached as a candidate.

January 14, the town nominated Jeremiah Stiles as a justice of the peace. They also voted to raise sixteen pounds for ammunition.

The following memorandum is copied from the records of this year :

“ Whereas orders were sent from the court to the selectmen, desiring them to assist the commanding officers of the militia in the town, by causing a town meeting to be called, in order to raise men for the continental army during the war, in obedience to which, a legal meeting was warned, and the town met on the 31st of March, made several proposals for encouragement, and voted thirty pounds to each man, if a sufficient number would turn out, but as not any appeared, the meeting was dismissed and nothing voted, that was conclusive or valid.”

In May or June, a court, appointed by the committees of safety in the county, was held at Keene, before whom were brought the principal tories in the county, to be tried for their offences or opinions. It has not been ascertained who were members of this court, but Benjamin Giles, of Newport, and Col. Hammond, of Swanzey, were probably two. The tories were guarded by a body of men, of whom Mr. Floyd, of Walpole, was commander. The court sat nearly two weeks, before they came to any decision ; and it was supposed by some, at the time, that the object of this delay

was, that the violent whigs, by whom they were surrounded, might become weary and disperse, and leave them at liberty to give a more lenient judgment than was demanded. In the end, the court decided that the tories should be confined to their farms, and give bonds for their good behaviour.

At a town meeting, held June 11, a committee was chosen "to state the price of articles, labor, &c as a late law directs." The town voted to pay to each man that has or shall enlist into the continental army, for the term of three years, or during the war, to make up the quota of this town, the sum of thirty pounds, exclusive of the bounty given by this State; and also to allow those that have done service in the war heretofore, in the same proportion as fifty-six pounds is for three years; and a committee was chosen to make an exact proportion of what every man had done in the war in time past, in order that an exact assessment may be made for the above said charge.

In December, in town meeting, Capt. Stiles, Capt. Howlet, and Jabez Fisher were successively chosen representative, and each declined accepting the office; Timothy Ellis was then chosen, and consented to serve. The town voted "to empower the representative to act in behalf of the town, in the choice of delegates to the continental congress. A similar vote was afterwards annually passed, from which it may be inferred, either that the town did not consider their representatives had authority, or that the latter were unwilling to take upon themselves the responsibility of acting in this behalf, without such a vote.

At the same meeting, the town "voted unanimously to give Mr. Aaron Hall, who has been preaching among us, a call to settle in the work of the gospel ministry in this town." They also voted to give him as a settlement £133 6s. 8d., and an annual salary of eighty pounds, both sums "to be

made equal in value to what the same sums were four years ago, when silver and gold were current among us."

The committee, chosen for the purpose, laid the proceedings of the town before Mr. Hall, who accepted the call. The ordination took place on the 10th of February, 1778. Mr. Hall was a beloved and popular minister to the time of his death, in 1814.

1778.

At a meeting, held January 17th, the inhabitants, "after reading and conferring upon the articles of confederation of the continental congress, voted that it is the minds of the town that they be established by this State."

"Voted further to instruct the representative to use his influence, in the General Assembly, that a free and full representation of every town in this State take place to a convention, to meet at such time and place as the General Assembly shall appoint," to form a plan of government for said State.

Chose Capt Stiles, Maj. Ellis, and Capt. Griswold, delegates to meet at Surry, and consult with the delegates of the other towns.

April 27, Jeremiah Stiles was chosen a delegate to meet in the convention to be held at Concord for the purpose of forming a constitution and plan of government for the State.

It must be well remembered, by those at all acquainted with our history, that the territory now constituting the State of Vermont, was originally claimed by New-Hampshire; and that long before the revolution, the executive of this State granted many townships within its limits. It was subsequently claimed by New-York, the government of which in many instances made grants of the same townships. This produced an animated, and in some

instances a virulent contest, between those who claimed the same land under these conflicting grants; and between the officers appointed by the different States and their adherents. At a convention of delegates from most of the towns in this territory, then called the New-Hampshire Grants, held at Westminster, in 1777, it was declared an independent State, by the name of Vermont.—Against this proceeding, New-York protested, and brought the subject before the Continental Congress. In June, 1778, sixteen towns, lying on Connecticut river, in New-Hampshire, were, at their request, made to the legislature of Vermont, admitted a part of the new State; and, in October, proposals were made to New-Hampshire, that all the towns lying west of the Masonian or curve line, should also be admitted to a union. With subsequent proceedings of the Vermont legislature, not only these sixteen towns, but most of the towns lying on the west bank of the river were dissatisfied, and the project was started of so extending the acknowledged boundaries of New-Hampshire as to embrace the dissatisfied towns in Vermont. And many were in favor of erecting a new State, to be composed of the western half of New-Hampshire, and the eastern half of Vermont. To determine on the course to be pursued, a convention of delegates from the towns on both sides of the river was appointed, to be held at Cornish, on the 19th of December. In the warrant calling a town meeting to be held at Keene, Dec. 7th, an article was inserted, “to see if it be the mind of the town to choose a delegate to meet at Cornish, to take into consideration matters relating to the State of Vermont.” At the meeting, this article was dismissed.

1779.

At a meeting, held March 2d, the town voted "that the selectmen be a committee to give the representative instructions to use his influence that the delegates from this State to the Continental Congress lay claim to the New-Hampshire grants, so called, provided that Congress will not confirm the same into a new State."

In this year, Capt. Mack, of Gilsum, probably incited by some of the zealous whigs in Keene, collected a party with a view of apprehending several tories, who resided here, and who were suspected of furnishing the enemy with provisions. On the evening of the 30th of May,* they assembled at Pattridge's tavern, near Wright's mills, on the road to Surry. In the night, Mack sent forward several men, with directions to place themselves separately at the doors of those houses where the tories resided, and prevent their escape. At sunrise he rode into Keene, at the head of his party, with a drawn sword; and when he came to the house of a tory, he ordered the sentinel, standing at the door, to "turn out the prisoner." The prisoner being brought out, and placed in the midst of his party, he proceeded onward. Having gone through the street, collected all of them, and searched their cellars for provisions, of which he found little, he returned to the tavern of Mr. Hale, situated where Dr. Twitchell's house now stands, and confined them in a chamber.

But when he first made his appearance, information was sent to Mr. Howlet, who then commanded the militia, of the commotion in the village.

* The first lines of a song, remembered by an aged citizen, fixes the day when this party visited Keene.

"Upon the thirty-first of May,
"Appear'd in Keene, at break of day,
"A mob both bold and stout."

Those who lived in these times, well remember that the muses were not silent amid the din of arms.

He instantly sent expresses to warn his company to appear forthwith in the street, with their arms and ammunition. About noon, they assembled, were paraded before the tavern, and ordered to load their muskets with powder and ball. Col. Ellis, a firm patriot, and frequently the representative of the town, came also. He asked Capt. Mack if he intended to pursue his object? I do, replied he, at the hazard of my life. Then, said Ellis, emphatically, you must prepare for eternity, for the people of Keene will not permit you to pursue this irregular mode of wreaking vengeance on any men, even if they are tories. Hearing this resolute speech, and perceiving the militia prepared to resist them, the followers of Mack were intimidated, and, one by one, deserted him. Finding himself alone, he went off himself, and the tories left their confinement.

At a meeting, held July 7, the town chose a committee to hire and agree with five men to serve in the continental army, on the best terms they can; and the same committee were empowered to hire two men for the Rhode-Island service, at the town's charge.

Sept 7, the town, "after hearing the plan of government, lately formed by the convention at Concord, read, and the several articles therein debated, voted unanimously to reject the same, for the following reason, viz. :—That the mode of representation is not agreeable to the sentiments of the town."

"Voted, further to instruct our delegate to use his influence,) if the convention proceed to amendments,) that the mode of representation be as follows :—That every town, consisting of one hundred families, shall be entitled to send a representative; that larger towns send one for each hundred families, and smaller towns be classed together

so as to send one for each hundred families, and the whole to be paid out of the public chest."

At the same meeting, the following preamble and vote passed :—"Whereas the selectmen of Portsmouth sent an address to this and the rest of the towns in this State, desiring their presence and assistance, by their delegates, to meet at Concord, in convention, to see if they can come into some agreement to state the price of the several articles bought and sold in this State ; therefore, voted, that Capt. Jeremiah Stiles attend said convention, as a delegate from this town."

Oct. 20, the town voted to raise three hundred and thirty pounds for paying the charge of raising men for the defence of the State of Rhode-Island, and the sum of £431 for the charge of raising men for the continental service.

1780.

March 7, the town voted, "that the singing in public worship be performed without reading line by line as they sing."

In the warrant calling a town meeting, to be held July 20, the following article was inserted :—"Whereas, by an act of the General Assembly of this State, each town is obliged to provide monthly a quantity of beef for the use of the continental army, for the space of five months ; therefore, to see what method the town will take to procure said quantity of beef." At the meeting, the town voted "to raise 11,300 pounds of beef ; each person to have liberty to pay his equal proportion thereof in beef. or to pay so much money in lieu thereof as he was taxed in the last State and continental tax."

In a warrant calling a town meeting, is the following recital : "Whereas the selectmen have received letters from some of the principal gentlemen in this county, who think it advisable, in this

critical juncture, that a county convention of delegates from the several towns, be called, to meet at Walpole, the 15th of November, to consult on matters relating to the jurisdiction of the New-Hampshire Grants ;"—and then a meeting is warned to choose one or more persons to represent the town in said convention. At the meeting, held Nov. 13, pursuant to the warrant, Daniel Newcomb and John Houghton were chosen delegates.

The following proceedings of this convention are extracted from the "Vermont State Papers," an interesting volume lately published by the authority of that state.

"At a Convention of Delegates from the several towns in the County of Cheshire, in the State of New-Hampshire, held at Walpole, in said County, on the 15th day of November, in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and eighty.

VOTED, That Dr. Page, Col. Hunt, Capt. Holmes, Daniel Jones, Esq. and Col. Bellows, be a committee to confer with gentlemen from any parts of the territory, called the New-Hampshire grants, concerning the jurisdiction of the said grants, and to consider what is proper to be done by the inhabitants thereof, relative to their jurisdiction ; that the same may be ascertained and established. Which committee, after due enquiry and consideration, report as follows, viz. The committee appointed by the convention, held at Walpole, November 15th, 1780, do report, that we have conferred with the several gentlemen present, who were committees from the different parts of the territory, called the New-Hampshire grants, viz. Cumberland, Gloucester and Grafton counties, and do find, that many matters lately agitated, with respect to the jurisdiction of the New-Hampshire grants, render a union of the inhabitants of that territory indispensably necessary. The said inhabitants received the grants of their lands from the same jurisdiction, and settled them while a union was extant ; which was an implicit engagement of authority, that it should be continued. But we were unjustly deprived of the advantages resulting from it, in the year 1764, by an arbitrary decree of Great Britain, to which we never acceded ; which decree, however, cannot be esteemed efficacious, since the declaration of independence ; it being one of those iniquitous measures, by which they were attempting to oppress the colonies ; and for which we have since thrown off subjection. This being the case, the union re-exists. And shall we throw it off ? God forbid. The situation of the territory aforesaid, by reason of

their being a frontier, as well as many other matters, which are obvious, respecting commerce and transactions of a public nature, makes it expedient that they be united in all their interests, in order to make their efforts, in that quarter, against the common enemy, more vigorous and efficacious. In respect to government, great disadvantages may arise by a division. In that case, delinquents may easily evade the operation of justice, by passing from one state to another, and thereby be induced more readily to practice iniquity in that part where the body of inhabitants, and the principal traffick, centre. And we imagine that a union of public interests, is the only means by which the contentions and animosities, now subsisting among the inhabitants of the territory aforesaid, can be brought to a happy issue ; for, so long as the course of justice is in different channels, where people are so nearly allied, disturbances will arise. From authentic information, we cannot but apprehend, that the state of New-Hampshire is greatly remiss, if not grossly negligent (to call it by no harsher name) in trusting affairs of such great importance as the settlement of their western boundary, to a committee, some of whom, we conceive, would risk the loss of half the state, rather than New-Hampshire should extend their claim west of Connecticut river. And, from the best authority that can be obtained, it appears that the agent of the state aforesaid, is endeavoring to confirm a division of the grants, contrary to their true interests ; which has given the people, on the grants, just occasion to rouse and exert themselves in support of an union of the whole. We, therefore, earnestly recommend, as the only means to obtain an union, preserve peace, harmony, and brotherly love, and the interest of the community in general, that a convention be called from every town within the said grants, to be held at Charlestown, on the third Tuesday of January next, at one of the clock, in the afternoon ; and that one or more members be appointed from each town, with proper instructions to unite in such measures as the majority shall judge most conducive to consolidate an union of the grants, and effect a final settlement of the line of jurisdiction.

B. BELLOWS, S. HUNT, D. JONES, L. HOLMES, W. PAGE,	}	Committee.
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In Convention, at Walpole, November 16, 1780.

The above report being repeatedly read,—Voted,

That it be accepted ; and a sufficient number of copies be printed and transmitted to the several towns on the New-Hampshire grants, on both sides of Connecticut river, for their notice,

to appoint one or more members to attend the said general convention ; which shall be deemed a sufficient notification.

By order of the Convention,

BENJAMIN BELLOWS, *Chairman.*

A true Copy—Attest, DANIEL NEWCOMB, Clerk."

At a meeting, held Dec. 11, the town "chose Timothy Ellis and Daniel Newcomb delegates to represent this town in the convention to be holden at Charlestown, the third Tuesday in January next, to act relating to the jurisdiction of the New-Hampshire Grants ;" and they voted "to instruct the delegates to come into a union with said grants, in case they (the said grants) be annexed to the state of New-Hampshire, and not otherwise."

1781.

The convention was held at Charlestown, on the day appointed, and was attended by delegates from forty-three towns. A majority voted in favor of uniting with the state of Vermont.

On the 24th of January, the selectmen, reciting that, "by a late act of the General Assembly, each town is obliged to furnish their quota of men for the continental army as soon as possible," called a meeting to be held February 7, "to see what method the town will take to raise their quota."

At the meeting, thus called, the following votes were passed :

Voted, to choose a committee to make an average of what service each man has done heretofore, as to hiring men or going personally into the service of the United States.

Upon further consultation and consideration. voted to postpone the average to some future time ; and

Voted, to divide the rateable inhabitants of the town into twelve equal classes, and each class to procure a man to serve in the continental army the space of three years, or during the war, upon their own charge, as soon as may be.

And a committee was chosen to divide the town into classes, and proceed as is directed in the aforesaid act.

At a meeting, held March 26, the town voted not to unite with the New-Hampshire Grants, on the west side of Connecticut river, 58 being against, and 29 in favor of the union. The town stood almost alone in this vote; Hinsdale, Walpole, Surry, Gilsum, Alstead, Charlestown, Acworth, Lempster, Wendell, Claremont, Newport, Cornish, Croydon, Plainfield, Grantham, Marlow, Richmond, Chesterfield, and Westmoreland voting in favor of the union.

By virtue of a precept from the General Assembly, a town meeting was called, and held on the 30th day of May, at which Daniel Newcomb was chosen a delegate to a convention, to be held at Concord on the first Tuesday of June, for the purpose of forming a plan of government.

At the same meeting, the town voted, that Thomas Baker stand in nomination for a justice of the peace, in order to be put in said office by the General Assembly.

At a meeting, held December 11, the plan of government, which had been agreed on by the convention at Concord, was laid before the town. "After hearing it read, and consulting upon the same," Josiah Richardson, William Banks, Ichabod Fisher, Major Howlet, and Daniel Newcomb were chosen a committee "to make such remarks upon it, in writing, as they think agreeable to the town," and make report at a future meeting.

At a meeting subsequently holden, this committee reported, that "it appears to them that the following paragraph in said form of government, viz. "and to prevent an undue influence in this state, which the first magistrate thereof may acquire by

the long possession of that important office, as also to stimulate others to qualify themselves for the service of the public in the highest station, no man shall be eligible, as governor of this state, more than three years in any seven," is inconsistent with the rights of the people of New-Hampshire, as declared in the eleventh article, in the first part of said constitution ; and that when a person hath governed the state three years faithfully, and successfully, his fidelity and experience ought rather to recommend him as a proper person to be elected governor the next year, than to disqualify him from governing within four years. The committee, therefore, report, as their opinion, that the foregoing paragraph of the said constitution ought to be expunged therefrom, and that the inhabitants of this town ought then to approve and accept of said constitution, without any further alteration or amendment ; and rather than said constitution should be rejected by reason of the foregoing objection thereto, or be again sent for the examination of the people, the committee are of opinion that the said constitution ought to be approved, accepted and established as it now stands."

This report was unanimously accepted, thirty-two voting in favor of it, and none against it.

1782.

The town, March 5, voted a premium of 40 shillings, to be paid to any inhabitant of the town, for killing a grown wolf, and 20 shillings for killing a wolf's whelp, in this or any circumjacent town.

At a meeting, held April 16, the town voted to choose a committee to make an account of the service each man has done in the present war, and make an average, so that each man may have credit for what he has already done ; and also to divide or class the inhabitants into twelve equal classes, (credit for what each man has done to be given

him,) and each class to provide, or hire, a man for the space of three years, or during the war, upon their own cost ; said classes to be so made, that each pay equal taxes.

A vote was also passed to reconsider a former vote of the town, on the plan of government, and take the same into further consideration ; and a committee was chosen to propose amendments.

At an adjourned meeting, "the committee on the constitution," recommended the following amendments, which were adopted, 53 yeas, 3 nays :

1st. That an exception be subjoined to the 17th article in the bill of rights, in the following words, viz. "except in cases where it shall appear that an impartial trial cannot be had in such county, and the Legislature shall, by act, order the trial to be in some adjacent county."

2d. That the 23d article, in the bill of rights, be expunged, and the following article be substituted : "Retrospective laws are, in most cases, oppressive and unjust, and ought not to be made for the decision of civil cases, or the punishment of offenders, unless in cases of persons absconding and going over to the enemy, as at the late revolution, where the laws prior to the offence were imperfect."

3d. As to the mode of representation, let it be as mentioned in the constitution, in all respects, excepting the following amendments, viz. that fifty members for the House of Representatives be the present number ; and the county of Rockingham having their equal proportion according to the number of ratable polls ; said number in that county not to increase or diminish ; and the other counties as they increase in number of ratable polls ; to increase in number of Representatives, until they arrive to as great a number as the county of Rockingham ; and that the delegates, at their first meeting, divide the counties into districts, and then

the delegates of each district, by themselves, vote for a representative for their own district, out of their own body ; and after each district is set off, the delegates to meet for the future in some convenient place, in their own district, and annually elect a member for said district.

4th. That all persons who have now a right by law to be voters in town affairs, be considered as qualified for electors of Governor, Senators, or any other officer, to be chosen by the people at large, as mentioned in the constitution, and that those who are elected have the same qualifications mentioned in the constitution.

5th. That the Governor be prohibited from erecting permanent fortifications without the advice of counsel ; and from demolishing such as have been, or may be, constructed by order of the Legislature, or advice of council, without their assent.

6th. That annual elections are a sufficient security against every abuse of power ; such parts of the constitution as limits the number of years for which a person shall be eligible to any office, be expunged from the constitution.

The votes of this and of the other towns were transmitted to the state convention, which held an adjourned meeting in the summer of this year. By them a new draft was prepared, which was also submitted to the people. On the fifth of November, the town of Keene voted unanimously "to receive the bill of rights as it now stands." A vote was also passed not to receive the other part of the constitution, except there be some amendments. And a committee was chosen to propose amendments.

At an adjourned meeting, the town voted to accept the constitution with the amendments proposed, which were as follows :

1. That the mode pointed out in said constitution for discharging the wages of the Representatives by the towns, will have a tendency to lessen the number, and by that means produce an injury to the State ; they, therefore, think it advisable that each Representative be paid, not only for his travel, but also his wages, from the Treasury of the State.

2. That the General Court appoint all Judicial officers, instead of their being appointed by the Governor and Council, and that the Governor, of course, commission them.

The disputes, which originated in the claim of the inhabitants of Vermont to be acknowledged as a separate State, still continued to disturb the repose of the county. The new State had commissioned civil and military officers on this side of Connecticut river, between whom, and the officers commissioned by New-Hampshire, contests sometimes arose, which the militia were once called out to terminate. In September, when the inferior court, acting under the authority of New-Hampshire, assembled at Keene, a mob, headed by Samuel Davis, of Chesterfield, and composed of persons favorable to a union with Vermont, assembled also for the purpose of preventing the court from transacting business. As disturbances were expected, a large number of the opposite party came into the village. At the opening of the Court, Davis, followed by his party, entered the Court house, went up to the clerk, laid his hand upon the docket, and declared it should not be opened. At this moment, a Mr. Fairbanks, of Swanzey, addressed the Court, praying them to adjourn for an hour, that the people present might assemble on the common, and the strength of both parties be ascertained. The Court adjourned ; the two parties paraded separately, Davis at the head of one, and Fairbanks, of

the other. The former being much the smallest, their courage failed, and the Court proceeded in their business without further molestation.

Davis and several others were arrested, by a warrant from the Court, and gave bonds to appear at the next term of the Superior Court, and to keep the peace. He then went out, and addressed his followers, advising them to be cool and orderly, as the most likely mode of obtaining their object. When the Superior Court assembled, an attempt was also made to prevent it from proceeding to business, which entirely failed. Davis and two others were indicted, "for that they, with others, committed an assault upon the Justices of the Inferior Court and their clerk, and compelled them to desist from executing the lawful business thereof." They pleaded guilty, and threw themselves upon the mercy of the Court, who, "having taken matters into consideration, forgave them, and ordered them to be discharged." At the same term, Robert Wier was indicted, for that he at said time, at Keene, to encourage the rioters, did openly and publicly, with a loud voice, in the English language, speak the following words, viz. "Col. Ashby (meaning the first Justice of said Inferior Court) is for arbitrary power, and arbitrary power he shall have; damn the Court, and their authority." He also pleaded guilty, was forgiven and discharged.

1783.

At a town meeting, held June 19, the town "voted unanimously that the Representative be instructed to use his influence, that all who have absented themselves from any of the United States of America, and joined with, or put themselves under the protection of, the enemies of the United States, be utterly debarred from residing within this State." This vote was passed at the request of the Representative, Daniel Kingsbury, to be instructed on the subject.

The Continental Congress having proposed and recommended such an alteration in the eighth article of the Confederation, as to make the population of the several States, instead of the value of the granted land therein, the rule for the apportionment of national taxes, the town, September 2, voted to accept of the alteration of said article, as recommended by the Continental Congress.

In the warrant calling a town meeting, to be held October 17, is found the following article: "To choose a suitable person to represent the town at a convention, to be holden at Peterborough, the 23d instant, to consult upon matters of public grievance, viz. a multiplicity of lawsuits, pensioning the officers of the army, and many others not named, in order to take some suitable measures for the redress of said grievances." At the meeting, held on the day appointed, Maj. Davis Howlet was elected, and a committee was appointed to give him instructions.

- These instructions were as follows: "That the said delegate use his influence, in convention, that the following matters of grievance be laid before the General Court: distress by law-suits; that all sorts of neat cattle and grain be made a lawful tender for the payment of debts, (in case of suits only,) the same to be appraised by judicious men under oath; to regulate the fee table, especially attorneys' fees, that they may not draw pay for the travel and attendance of their clients in court, except in cases where it is necessary for clients to attend; that the officers of the continental army be not allowed five years pay; that State securities be made a lawful tender in case of suit."

At an adjourned meeting, the doings of this convention were read, but "the town, not fully agreeing to approve thereof, voted to dismiss the meeting."

1784.

The treaty of peace with Great-Britain having secured to the tories the privilege of returning to this country, to collect their debts and settle their affairs, Elijah Williams, Esq. came to Keene, for that purpose, in the beginning of this year. His appearance here so exasperated the zealous whigs, that they seized him and carried him before Thomas Baker, Esq. a Justice of the peace. What were the charges against him, or whether any charges were exhibited, has not been ascertained. The Justice, perhaps with a view to protect him from outrage, ordered him to recognize for his appearance at the Court of Sessions, to be held at Charlestown, in April, and committed him to the custody of the sheriff. With this, the populace were not satisfied, and they discovered an intention of assaulting and beating him ; but he was surrounded and guarded to his lodgings by the old and the young men who happened to be present.

The animosity of the whigs, aggravated probably by the arts of those who were indebted to him, was, however, so great that they determined he should not thus escape their vengeance. On the day before that appointed for the sitting of the Court, a party concealed themselves in the pines near Fisher brook, intending, when he passed with the sheriff, to get him into their power. The sheriff passed without him, relying upon the promise he had made to appear at Court the next day. This circumstance excited their suspicions ; they came immediately into the street, seized Williams at his lodgings, and, placing him in the midst of them, repaired to a tavern in Ash Swamp. When he arrived there, two bundles of black-birch rods were produced, from which it appeared that a place had been concerted to compel him to run the gauntlet, with the view, probably, of inducing him, by

such harsh treatment, again to leave the country. But by this time, a large number of considerate citizens had assembled and arrived at the tavern. A proposition was made, that the whole subject should be referred to a committee. A committee was appointed; their report was too favorable to Williams, to suit the majority, and was rejected. Another committee was appointed, who reported that he should leave the town the next day, and leave the state the next week. This report was agreed to; but the minority, still dissatisfied, privately sent out messengers, to collect more of their friends. This being communicated to those who were disposed to protect Williams, they advised him to retire immediately. An attempt was made to prevent him from mounting a horse, which had been offered him by a friend. A conflict ensued, in which the horse was overthrown, and several persons were knocked down with clubs. He at length, however, mounted, with the assistance of his friends, and rode through the crowd, which continued to oppose him.

The next day, he repaired to Charlestown, and presented himself to the Court, which, thereupon, passed the following order: "that Elijah Williams, Esq. now in the keeping of Isaac Griswold, by virtue of a mittimus from Thomas Baker, Esq., continue in the custody of the said Isaac, until he shall have transacted the business upon which he came into this part of the country, and then be permitted to leave this State, upon his good behaviour, without further molestation." After settling his affairs, Williams repaired to Nova-Scotia. Shortly after, in consequence of ill health, he returned to Deerfield, his native town, died, and was buried by the side of his ancestors.

1786.

At a meeting, held January 12, the town chose a committee to take an account of all the services done by the town during the late war, that the same may be sent to the committee of claims in said State.

1788.

January 7th, the town chose the Rev. Aaron Hall a delegate to sit in convention, to be held at Exeter, "for the full and free investigation, discussion, and decision upon, the proceedings of the Federal Convention," which framed the constitution of the United States. After a short session, the Exeter convention, on the 23d of February, adjourned to the 21st of June.

February 8th, the town "voted, that they will not, at present, shew their minds whether they will accept or refuse the new constitution."

March 4, the town voted to accept the report of the committee on the claims of those that served in the late war, and were not allowed in the last average, so far as that each one shall have two thirds of the sums set to the several names in said report; and they also voted to raise the sum of one hundred and six pounds, to pay the amount of this and a former average. The names and sums, mentioned in *this* report, are on the record, and are as follows:

	£	s.	d.
Simeon Clark	2	2	4,
Jonathan Pond	2	2	4,
Maj. Davis Howlet	2	2	4,
Thos. Field	2	2	4,
Adin Holbrook	2	2	4,
Capt. Stephen Griswold	2	2	4,
Joshua Osgood	1	12	0,
Jonathan Dwinel	1	1	2,
Gideon Ellis	1	1	2,

	£	s.	d.
Timothy Ellis, 3d.	1	1	2,
Lieutenant Wright	2	10	2,
Abraham Wheeler	0	17	2,
Royal Blake	4	14	0,
Capt. Richardson	1	4	0,
Benj. Willis	2	1	2,
Isaac Esty	1	8	10,
Maj. Josiah Willard	1	16	8,
Samuel Hale	2	2	4

1790.

The number of inhabitants this year was 1314.

After this period, but few, if any, events have occurred, which would be interesting or instructive. The adoption of the National and State constitutions, and the regular administration of the laws, have calmed the agitations which once were too common, and compelled the restless and discontented to engage in the quiet occupations of productive industry. Society has improved, the town has prospered, and now presents one of the fairest evidences of the benign effects of a regular government and of free institutions.



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